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ABSTRACT

This document profiles 10 successful experiences in nonformal education (NFE) programs across Africa. Common features of the programs profiled are as follows: (1) provide educational opportunities for those who have missed out on formal education; (2) show evidence of learners' acquisition of competencies for work and survival; (3) demonstrate capacity for innovation in facilitative learning; (4) provide space for community involvement in provision and management of learning opportunities and educational resources; (5) establish functional links between school and community; (6) emphasize the relationship between learning and capacity for earning; (7) contribute to achievement of the goals of education for all; (8) show evidence of collaborative partnership; (9) facilitate fulfillment of learners' basic needs and rights; and (10) demonstrate potential for replication. Key characteristics of the nine case study programs are as follows: (1) diversity of objectives; (2) demand orientation; (3) formal-nonformal nexus; (4) official recognition; and (5) innovation. The following critical issues are discussed: the concept of mainstreaming; NFE in the image of the formal education community; and integrating formal education and NFE. The following ways forward for NFE are proposed: (1) advocating a legal and policy framework for NFE; (2) constructing an institutional framework; (3) developing NFE in its own image; and (4) capacitating the NFE teaching force. (MN)

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Ekundayo J.D. Thompson

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Table of Contents

1.0 Objective of the Paper..... 1
2.0 Background.....
2.1 Developments in the Kenyan NFE Scene.....
3.0 Introduction..... 4
3.1 Key Definitions
3.2 The Rights-Based Approach to Basic education
3.3 Situation Analysis of Non-Formal Education

4.0 The Case of Kenya 9
4.1 The Socio-Economic Circumstances
4.2 Proposition

5.0 Tenability of the Proposition..... 11
5.1 Guiding Questions
5.2 The Genesis of, and Rational for Alternative Forms of Learning
5.3 Commencement of Alternative Forms of Learning
5.4 Need-Based, Demand-Driven Alternative Forms of Learning
5.5 Persistence of Alternative Approaches

6.0 Selected Case Studies in NFE and AABE..... 21
6.1 Undugu Basic Education programme
***6.2 Lchekuti* (Shepherds') Programme**
6.3 Basic Eduction in Urban Poverty Areas
6.4 Alternative Approaches through Community Schools in Zambia
6.5 Better Environmental Science Programme
6.6 Political Literacy and Civic Education Programme
6.7 Creating a Literate Environment Through Mother-Tongue Literacy in Burkina Faso
6.8 Cost-Effective Capacity Building in Literacy in Mali
6.9 Research and Development of Literacy Materials

7.0 Summary of the Key Characteristics of the Case Studies..... 36
- 7.1 Diversity of Objectives
- 7.2 Demand Orientation
- 7.3 Formal-Non-Formal Nexus
- 7.4 Official Recognition
- 7.5 Innovation

8.0 Some Critical Issues and Concerns..... 37
- 8.1 Concept of Mainstreaming
- 8.2 Mainstreaming: A Critical Issue
- 8.3 NFE in the Image of the Formal Education Community
- 8.4 Integrating the Formal and Non-Formal

9.0 Proposals for A Way Forward..... 41
- 9.1 Advocacy for a Legal and Policy Framework NFE and AABE
- 9.2 Construction of an Institutional Framework
- 9.3 Development of NFE in its Own Image
- 9.4 Capacitating the NFE Teaching Force

10.0 In Lieu of Conclusion..... 44

1.0 Objective of the Paper

The objective of this paper is to present and analyze selected successful experiences in alternative approaches to basic education in Africa, and to discuss their implications for policy formulation, and action to provide education for all. In this discussion a "successful experience" is one that has

a) provided access to educational opportunities especially for those who have missed out on formal education.
b) shown evidence of learners' acquisition of competencies for the world of work and for survival in general.
c) demonstrated capacity for innovation in facilitating learning.
d) provided space for community involvement in the provision and management of educational opportunities and learning resources.
e) functional links between the "school" and the community.
f) relationship between learning and the capacity for earning.
g) contributed to the achievement of the goals of education for all.
h) shown evidence of collaborative partnership.
i) facilitated fulfilment of the learners' basic needs and basic rights.
j) potential for replicating the experiences and lessons generated by the programme.

The thrust of this discourse will be on programmes within and outside the framework of formal education which offer, systematically or methodologically, alternative learning opportunities. The rationale for this approach is in the emerging consensus that formal and non-formal education should be seen as mutually dependent parts of a whole, and not as separate and often competing entities. The whole, which is an integrated system of education and learning, is greater than the sum of its constituent parts.

2.0 Background

There has been a groundswell of action and sustained efforts to provide alternative educational opportunities for the millions of children and youths who have missed out on formal education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The reasons for the presence of the army of children and youths outside

the mainstream formal education system are not difficult to discern. They include the contradictions and distortions in the macro-economic situation, increasing levels of mass pauperization resulting in severe disparities in standards of living between those who have and those who do not. Internal armed conflicts, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic are making a bad situation worse. There is a causal relationship between these problems and those which seemed to have incapacitated many governments to fulfil a basic need, i.e. education, and to ensure its availability and accessibility as a basic right. It is against the backdrop of these problems and challenges that the subject of alternative approaches to basic education should be discussed.

It is instructive to recall the spirited debate which ensued in the late sixties following the revelation that a global crisis in education existed (Coombs, 1968). The reactions to that revelation were many and varied ranging from a fierce criticism of formal education, resulting in calls for reform of education systems, to the actual design and implementation of alternative educational programmes. The nature and content of the debate and its outcomes have been exhaustively documented. They serve as a reference point for a resumption of what seem to be unfinished business, given the persistence of the problem of out-of-school children and youths, the need for alternative approaches to the provision of basic education in response to the diversity of learning needs, and the pervasive changes that are dictating action on many fronts. Arguably, a lot has changed in education but undoubtedly a lot more need to change. It is therefore important to reflect on the changes that have taken place and position ourselves for the changes that are sure to come with renewed vigour to revitalize learning processes for *meaningful* and sustainable learning outcomes.

2.1 Developments in the Kenyan NFE Scene

In Kenya, over the last few years, a number of significant developments have taken place in the domain of non-formal education (NFE) and alternative approaches to basic education (AABE). The Jomtien Conference of 1990 was a motivator but the realization of the need for action in response to the growing number of out-of-school children and youths was the real catalyst for action.

In the early '90s the Kenyan Ministry of Education set up a non-formal education desk which has subsequently been upgraded to a non-formal education unit. It is expected that a department with responsibility for non-formal education will soon evolve. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with bilateral partners has formulated draft policy guidelines on NFE which are currently being discussed with a view to finalizing them. Under the aegis of the Government of Kenya – UNICEF Programme of Cooperation in Non-Formal Education, non-formal schools and centers have received various types of support towards quality provision of education.

Significant progress has also been made in the area of partnership and collaboration. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), United Nations Chilren's Fund, (UNICEF), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development through the Department of Adult Education, NGOs, CBOs, Universities and the print media have collaborated to influence policy with regard to NFE and AABE through capacity building, research and studies and analysis of successful experiences. The Maralal Stakeholders' Forum in March 2000, examined NFE and AABE in Kenya[1]. It was followed by a national symposium in April at which the Kenya Country Working Group on NFE was launched. Several follow-up meetings of the Working Group have been held to operationalize its terms of reference and to formulate a plan of operation. The support of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) towards the formation and consolidation of the Working Group is significant in the development of NFE, in Kenya. In December 2000, Kenya hosted an experts' meeting on a NFE Information System; it was jointly sponsored by UNESCO and ADEA. Efforts are now underway to establish a database on NFE in Kenya.

Under the aegis of the GTZ-assisted Post-Literacy Project, a study of eighty-eight non-formal schools and centers was conducted by this writer in three urban areas. The findings of the study have been widely disseminated and are being used to advocate for policy in favour of NFE, and to take programmatic action to respond to the learning needs of the NFE clientele. (Ekundayo Thompson, 2001).

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[1] Nzomo J. et. al. (Comp). 2000. *Non-Formal Education, Alternative Approaches to Basic Education in Kenya. Report of Stakeholders' Forum on NFE-AABE*

A national conference on Children in Need of Special Protection and Care was organized by the Kenya Government in August 2001. Provision of education for all children was one of the topics discussed[2]. This conference was preceded by two conferences on basic education, and youth organized earlier in the year. All of the above-mentioned activities indicate the importance of action, at both the global and local levels, to call attention to the need for non-formal education and alternative approaches to basic education in pursuit of the goal of education for all.

The developments in Kenya are instructive in view of their lessons which may have implications for the provision and practice of NFE in other countries in the sub-region.

3.0 Introduction

NFE has, in general, been an expression of the desire to provide education and facilitate learning through alternative modes of delivery for children and youngsters who have been unable to access formal educational opportunities. But the descriptor, *non-formal*, meaning forms of education provided outside the mainstream formal system, has unfortunately rendered the concept negative given the tendency of equating lack of formality with poor quality provision. Experiences from a number of Sub-Saharan countries indicate that the concept and practice of NFE has at times evoked feelings of revulsion and derision among the powers-that-be in the formal education domain. It would seem that the term is at best unattractive and at worst opprobrious. To those schooled in the formal school tradition and who are charged with reproducing and perpetuating the dominant mode of education, i.e. formal education, non-

[2] This writer prepared a paper entitled "Towards Education for All, the non-formal dimension: policy and programmatic implications for children in need of special protection and care". (Unpublished)
See also, Thompson, Ekundayo J.D. 2001. *Non-Formal Education in Urban Kenya Findings of A Study in Kisumu, Mombasa and Nairobi.* GTZ, ADEA NFE Working Group and Commonwealth Secretariat.

formal education would seem unwelcome and even a threat to the status quo. This is so because continuity and not change is seemingly the preoccupation of the administration of formal education. Yet, the phenomenon of change which NFE implies is dictating the modes of operation everywhere including situations in which decisions on formal education are made. Undoubtedly change is an imperative that is pervading all aspects of human endeavours, education not excluded.

The discourse on NFE which was initiated by Coombs et al. (1968; 1973; 1974) has continued to influence the change agenda in the domain of education and training. Not only is the need for change recognized, now more than ever before, the repercussions of the unwillingness to change are also starkly in evidence. NFE and AABE have gained prominence on the change agenda due in part to the inadequacies and problematic of the formal education system which manifest themselves in low levels of both the internal and external efficiency of the system, high rates of dropout, low rates of persistence, didactic methodology and questionable learning achievement. The inadequacies of formal education relative to the needs and circumstances of its clientele constitute a source of justification for NFE and AABE. Another source of justification is the right of everyone to education. This implies the right to determine how education shall be provided in conformity with legal norms, values and cultural beliefs of both providers and beneficiaries. The essence of development is to make opportunities and choices available to people. Towards this end, "parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children" (Article 26/3 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*).

3.1 Key Definitions: Non-Formal Education and Alternative Approaches to Basic Education (NFE and AABE)

a) Non-Formal Education

Mapping out strategies to "mainstream" Non-Formal Education and Alternative Approaches to Basic Education is the remit of this paper. The use of the term *Non-Formal Education* will be restricted to systematic learning opportunities which are organized outside the framework of the formal system of education, and that are addressing the learning needs of specific target groups.

b) Alternative Approaches to Basic Education

Alternative Approaches to Basic Education refers in this discussion, to a system of learning which is characterized by flexibility, capacity to recognize and creatively utilize diversity, and transparency in terms of the degree of openness – open access, open learning, and limitless opportunities to release the creative potential of the learners. Alternative approaches are applicable to both formal and non-formal learning situations and in time could be the means to harmonize the two in an integrated system of education which brings both formal and non-formal together with parity of esteem, and with due regard to diversity in a life-long learning framework.

c) Basic Education

Basic education refers to learning outcomes, i.e. knowledge and skills acquisition and application, positive attitudes formation, internalization and exhibition of values for a variety of life - and work-enhancing purposes and for the good that is inherent in knowledge itself. One of the purposes of basic education is to meet basic needs and to facilitate and enhance the exercise of basic rights.

3.2 The Rights – Based Approach to Basic Education

This paper adopts the rights-based framework for the provision of basic education. Provision of basic needs including food, education, health, water and security of life and property is an obligation of the state. Yet, the majority of the African people are unable to meet their basic needs because of poverty and the inability or reluctance of their governments to provide them. Poverty levels have increased due to a number of man-made causes and natural disasters including bad governance and management of the political economy. Without good governance mismanagement attempts to provide basic needs and efforts to facilitate the exercise of basic rights will be hamstrung. Current measures to alleviate poverty and fight corruption in a number of Sub-Saharan countries are part of this process.

The rights-based approach to basic education is predicated on the conviction that, for the sustainable exercise of basic rights, duty bearers are expected to fulfil their duties and obligations not only in providing

opportunities for the exercise of the rights but also in taking appropriate measures to ensure that they are exercised. The objectives of basic education, therefore, must facilitate the exercise and enjoyment of basic rights and fulfilment of basic needs. Towards this end, education for all is a necessary requirement.

Figure 1: The Rights-Based Approach to Basic Education

Right holder	**Duty Bearer**	**Nature of Duty/Responsibility**
Children in Need of Special Protection and Care (CNSPs)	Government	Provision of access to educational opportunities for all. Creation of the necessary conditions for the exercise of the rights of the child e.g. legal, policy, institutional and curricular framework conditions. Recognition and accreditation of learning achievement including prior learning and experience.
	International Multi-Lateral and Bi-lateral Partners	Funding and technical support.
Parents	Parents	Utilization of educational opportunities provided. Self-direction in learning e.g. Learning how to Learn.
	Community	Creation of an enabling environment for learning. Advocacy Support for good governance.
	Social Partners and Providers of basic education i.e. NGOs, CBOs, Civil Society	Provision of financial support, Social and resource mobilization. Provision of culturally-relevant and gender-sensitive educational opportunities for all. Funding and technical support.

The 2001 Biennial Conference of ADEA was a timely assembly of duty bearers whose efforts towards the realization of basic needs and the

enjoyment of basic rights complement those of the state parties who are the primary duty bearers. Collectively, what can we do? The following can be done:

- Advocacy for the formulation and implementation of sound policies for NFE and AABE through solicitation of political commitment
- Provision of an informed basis for policy formulation and analysis through research
- Contribution to the implementation of policies through capacity development
- Forging of strategic partnerships and creation of networks to realize set objectives
- Mobilization of resources to promote NFE and AABE objectives
- Documentation and sharing of lessons and experiences.

Over the years ADEA has been involved in some or all of these activities in pursuit of the goal of development of education in Africa. Although much has been done much still remains to be done in terms of concrete action on the ground.

3.3 Situation Analysis of Non-Formal Education

An adequate analysis of the NFE and AABE situation cannot be done without an examination of the problems with which formal education has been grappling. The growth of the non-formal education sector is the direct result of the contradictions of the formal education system as the case of Kenya indicates.

4.0 The Case of Kenya

4.1 The Socio-Economic Circumstances

Kenya has made commendable efforts since independence in 1963 to make educational opportunities available to the majority of its citizens. This was evident in the exponential growth in the number of primary schools, and the rapid rise of enrolment rates. From 891,533 pupils in 6,058 primary schools in 1963 to 6.0 million pupils in 17,000 primary in 1999. Tuition fee-free education was declared for the first four years of

primary schools in 1974 and was extended to the entire primary school system five years later in 1979. Primary gross enrolment rates reached 95% in 1989. In the 1980s a number of policy initiatives to reform the educational system resulted in problems which have persisted. For example, the cost-sharing policy of 1988 resulted in an unbearable financial burden on households and communities. The fall in the gross enrolment rates, 78% or lower in 1996 was a consequence of the high cost of education. When the cost burden becomes unbearable, poor families tend to enroll fewer children and allow them to drop out prematurely.

On the financial burden on households it was reported that the annual household expenditure on education for one child in 1997 was Kshs.43,950 in an urban area, Kshs.4,620 in a rural area, and Kshs.81,000 in a private upper primary school. The monthly expenditure was Kshs.4,883 (urban), Kshs.513 (rural) and Kshs. 9,000 (private school). The burden on households can be imagined when the expenditure is viewed against the background of monthly income. According to the 1994 *Welfare Monitoring Survey II,* the monthly household income for rural and urban areas was Kshs.8,508 and Kshs.14,295.20 respectively [3]

The actual household expenditure on education as a proportion of household income depended on

- the number of children going to school
- the level of their schooling
- the attitudes of their parents towards education
- the household expenditure on other basic needs such as food, health and housing. (cited in A. Dawa *et al.,* 199:17)

The mean monthly expenditure on education according to the *Welfare Monitoring Survey* II (*op. cit.*) stood at 55.15% for the rural areas and 58.9% for the urban areas. With the escalating cost of education, the poor

[3] Central Bureau of Statistics. 1994. Welfa*re Monitoring Survey II.*

performance of the economy, high unemployment and the structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and the World Bank necessitating reduction of public expenditure on basic social services including education, the effects on parents' ability to meet the cost of educating their children have been devastating. The high dropout and low completion rates which have characterized the formal education system are a consequence of the unbearable financial burden resulting from these circumstances.

The increasing levels of poverty evidenced by 52% of the population subsisting below the poverty line; the increasing cost burden on households and communities – between 1992 and 2000 households contribution towards the cost of education was 48% (*Republic of Kenya Appropriation Accounts*); high dropout and low completion rates – completion rates are less than 50%; large out-of-school population – 4.2 million according to the *1999 Population and Housing Census.* 31.8% of the primary school-going age children did not have access in 1999.

The cause-and-effect relationship between the poor performance of the economy (0.3% economic growth in 2000) and the increasing levels of pauperization resulting in the dysfunction of the education system can be discerned. Cultural beliefs and practices which impede access especially for girls, and the ravages of the HIV/AIDs pandemic are among the contributing factors to a bad situation. All of these factors coalesce to force communities to assume responsibility for the education of the army of out-of-school children and youths.

4.2 Proposition

The curricular and organizational approaches including alternative approaches to basic education have contributed to increasing access to learning opportunities for out-of-school children, youths and adults.

5.0 Tenability of the Proposition

5.1 Guiding Questions

The tenability of the proposition stated above will be addressed by the following questions:

Why and how did alternative forms of learning come into being?

Are they based on the expressed needs of the learners?
Why have they persisted over time?
What internal and external factors have contributed to their sustainability?
Why do they remain marginal?
How can their quality be improved?
How can they be mainstreamed or scaled up?
How can the critical issues of access, equity and learning outcomes be addressed in the development of alternative forms of learning?
What lessons can be learned from the experiences of existing alternative forms of learning?
How can the experiences generated be replicated?

The above questions will be addressed with reference to case studies which have been selected on the bases of the following criteria:

- The nature of the objectives which they seek to achieve e.g. provision of equitable access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged children and youths.
- Empowerment of the individual/and community.
- Promotion of effective participation/political socialization.
- Development and acquisition of knowledge and life skills.
- Regional representation. Cases from the Eastern, Western and Southern African sub regions have been selected.
- Diversity of the needs of the target groups i.e. children in school and out-of-school, young people and adults.
- Type and nature of partnership which influenced the provision e.g. bi-lateral, multi-lateral, NGO, CBO, private.
- Good track record of work on the ground i.e. generation of lessons and experiences through participatory processes.

The following matrix indicates the number of cases selected by country and approach

Country	Sub-Region	Sub-sector	Type of Approach	Main Objectives	No. of Cases
Kenya	Eastern Africa "	Out of School "	NFE AABE	Provision of access	1 1
Uganda	"	Out-of-school and Formal	AABE	"	1
Zambia	Southern Africa	Out-of-school	Community empowerment	"	1
Zimbabwe	Southern Africa	In-school Formal	AABE	Methodological transformation	1
Sierra Leone	Western Africa	Literacy, Adult and Continuing Education	Empowerment	Political transformation	1
Burkina Faso	Western Africa	Literacy, Adult and Continuing Education	Literacy	To facilitate mother-tongue literacy	1
Mali	Western Africa	"	Literacy	To facilitate mother-tongue literacy	1
Senegal	Western Africa	"	Literacy	Research and materials production	1

Countries =8 Sub-Regions =3 Sub-Sectors =3 Approaches=5 Cases =9

5.2 The Genesis of, and Rationale for Alternative Forms of Learning

The tenability of the proposition above can also be assessed in the context of the very genesis and recognized rationale for NFE and AABE.

Alternative forms of learning have historically been an important part of the processes of socialization in Africa. Responsibility for the education and socialization of the young which included transmission and preservation of the cultural heritage was vested in the family and community. Learning was by doing through a variety of means viz, skills training, role performance, apprenticeship, mentoring, role modeling and

participation in rites of passage.[4] The roles which education was expected to fulfil were functional and life-enhancing. Learning to know, to do, to be and to live together [5] was integrated and holistic. The needs of the individual learner were organically linked to the needs of the community. Communalism was an underlying principle of education and learning. The purpose of education was living, the contexts of learning were the ecology of learning and life itself. The content of learning was dictated by the functional needs of the learners; thus, relevance, contextual, cultural and social, was an important feature of learning objectives and learning systems. The modes of learning were open as was the environments in which learning took place. Work, which was closely linked to education and learning, had both a moral and instructional value. The value of traditional forms of education have been highlighted by Moumouni (1968), and Fafunwa and Asiku (1982). The latter contend that,

> no study of the history of education in Africa is complete or meaningful without adequate knowledge of the traditional or indigenous educational system prevalent in Africa prior to the introduction of Islam or Christianity.

The current forms of alternative approaches are firstly, the direct results of the dysfunction of a de-culturated mainstream formal education; secondly, the desire of communities and groups to decide what and how their children must learn; thirdly, the developments at the regional and global levels e.g. the *Education for All Initiative* and other regional initiatives which have implications for education and lastly, the impact of educational philosophical thoughts.

5.2.1 The effects of the dysfunction of formal education

The concept of non-formal education was introduced by Coombs (*ibid.*) in his analysis of the world educational crisis. His seminal work was followed by two research reports commissioned by the World Bank and the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and prepared by the International Council for Educational Development (ICED). *New Paths to Learning for Rural Children and Youth (1973),* and *Attacking Rural Poverty: How Non-formal Education Can Help* (1974) discussed the efficacy of non-formal education in breaking the cycle of

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[4] See, for example, Jomo Kenyatta. 1938. *Facing Mount Kenya.* Kenya Publishers, Nairobi

[5] Jaques Delores. 1996. *Report of the International Commission on Education for the C21st.* UNESCO, Paris.

rural poverty. A functional view of non-formal education was adopted i.e. the capacity of non-formal education to improve the quality of life of people by improving agricultural productivity at the same time.

The concept of non-formal education as an alternative approach to formal education was embraced. NFE's focus on specific learning objectives, learning needs, target clientele, organizational and curricular flexibility, relevance to contextual realities and cultural acceptability was attractive to those who yearned for other possibilities in education especially at a point in time when formal education had been the focus of sustained criticism by Illich (1970) Reimer (1971), Dore (1976), and Freire (1972, 1974, 1976, 1985). The persistence of the crisis in education which Coombs (*ibid.*) identified in 1968 justified their criticisms.

5.2.2 The Communities' Right To Choose

Here one refers to the desire of communities and groups to decide why, what and how their children should learn. Secular and religious communities have initiated action on alternative approaches to learning because of their desire to participate in determining the content and method of education and learning. The survey of non-formal education conducted by the Kenya Institute of Education in 1994 revealed that Islamic communities, for example wanted their children to be taught "in their own institutions" [6] Another Survey on Formal and Non-Formal Education in parts of Samburu, Turkana, Marsabit and Moyale Districts in Kenya [7] (arid and semi arid areas) found that the communities clearly

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[6] *Kenya Institute of Education 1994. Survey of Non-Formal Education.*

[7] Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. 2000. *Survey of Formal and Non-Formal Education in parts of Samburu, Turkana, Marsabit and Moyale Districts.* Nairobi.

articulated their education needs and expressed the desire to address them at the local level. The shepherds' schools in Marsabit District are a concrete expression of that desire. The study was carried out against the backdrop of sustained action to reverse the decline in education, in pastoralists districts

> where less than 40% of eligible school-age children are in primary school and more than 60% drop out before acquiring a basic education. Of those who remain, less than 35% complete standard 8. Gender disparities are most prevalent in these districts. There is an acute under-participation of girls with primary enrolment rates between 29% and 40% and completion rates between 12% and 35%.

5.2.3 Developments at the global level with implications for educational reforms

a) The Addis Ababa Conference

In the 1960s discussions had been initiated on the development of education in Africa. The Addis Ababa Conference on "the Development of Education in Africa" discussed strategies to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 1980. Twenty-one years after the Addis Ababa Conference the pledge to universalize primary education was examined at the Conference of African Ministers of Education and those responsible for Economic Planning, in Harare, Zimbabwe. **The Harare Declaration** which summed up the conclusions of the conference contained a number of strategies to solve the multifarious problems which had bedeviled the development of education in Africa. The strategies included a consideration of alternative forms of education.

b) Initiatives by the Commonwealth Secretariat

The issue of alternative forms of education was taken up by the Commonwealth Secretariat which organized a specialist meeting on "Alternative Forms of Post-Primary Education and Training in Africa" in Zimbabwe, in 1986. The meeting discussed the following possibilities:

- Expanding conventional secondary schools within the constraints imposed by making schools more efficient in their use of resources and therefore more cost-effective;
- Expanding equivalence education-courses outside school leading to equivalent qualifications through correspondence programmes, adult education classes, special classes and study groups;

- Expanding out-of-school community-based vocational skills-training programme.

The participants, including the writer, argued that, "the potential of out-of-school programmes for expanding national second-level education and training provision may be greater than their present status suggests". The earlier efforts to mainstream alternative approaches to formal education did not yield much because the opportunities to transform education were either not seized, or hamstrung.

c) The 1990 Education for All Conference

The Education for All Conference in 1990 was to set the stage for a rethink of the "why" and "how" of basic education. The **EFA Declaration and Framework for Action** provide the general principles and modalities which are expected to guide the efforts to achieve education for all. However, the EFA initiative has been criticized by a number of writers, for example, Moralez-Gomez and Alberto Tores (1990) because of its premise on the Basic Human Needs approach (Sandbrook, 1982).

In order to meet the basic learning needs of all the following guiding principles should be emphasized:

i) clear formulation and statement of the purposes of education
ii) specifically designed educational opportunities for children and young people with special learning needs
iii) structural, curricular and delivery system diversity and transformation
iv) quality and equitable provision of basic education services
v) active participation of the learners
vi) relevance of the learning content
vii) life-long learning
viii) diversity of learning needs
ix) integrated approach to learning
x) shared responsibility for basic education provision
xi) partnership

5.2.4 *The Impact of Education Philosophical Thoughts on Alternative Modes of Learning*

Educational thought and practice have been revolutionized by one of the most influential thinkers, Paulo Freire (1974). His philosophy of *concientization* has had tremendous impact on educational discourse globally. *Participation*, *empowerment*, *freedom*, and *consciousness raising* were some of the themes he addressed through his dialogical approach. Other thinkers on education include Malcolm Knowles, (1970) and Susane Kindervatter (1979). Rudolf Steiner (1909) occupies a special place in view of his unique contribution to educational philosophy, the arts, and science.

5.3 *Commencement of Alternative Forms of Learning in Kenya*

The study on NFE in Urban Kenya *(op. cit.)* revealed that the early initiatives on alternative forms of learning were started before 1980 in Mombasa. Between 1990 and 1994 the efforts to provide alternative educational opportunities were intensified as the following table indicates:

Table 1: Years of Establishment of the Schools and Centres = 83

Place	Before '80	'80-'84	'85-'89	'90 -'94	'95 - '99	2000	Total
Kisumu				4	15	3	22
Mombasa	3	2	1	7	11	3	27
Nairobi		1	8	12	11	2	34

. No indication of year of establishment - 5

Initiatives on alternative approaches were taken by individuals, communities, groups, local authorities, religious organizations and the Government as the following table indicates.

Table 2: Owners and Proprietors of NFE Schools and Centres = 83

Place	LA[8]	Ch.	Mus.	Com.	Govt[9]		Gps[10]	Inds	Total
					DAE	MIN			
Kisumu		4	1	14	1	1	1	2	24
Mombasa	1	2	1	10	1	2	3	4	24
Nairobi	1	12		8	2		6	6	35
Total	2	18	2	32	4	3	10	12	

LA=Local Authority Ch=Church Mus.=Muslim Com.=Community
Govt.=Government Gps.=Groups Inds.=Individuals

It is instructive to note that the intensification of efforts to provide alternative forms of education in Kenya peaked between 1990 and 2000. A number of factors including the 1990 Jomtien Conference, the generally difficult economic situation and the 1998 cost-sharing policy which increased the financial burden on households and communities accounted for the growth in alternative learning opportunities. The real effects of the 1988 cost-sharing policy could have been felt two years later in 1990.

Since the early nineties we have been witnessing a proliferation of programmes in response to the educational crisis that is unfolding in Kenya and on the African continent. This is evidenced by the increasing number of non-formal and alternative approaches to basic education programmes. Although a majority of these programmes are outside the framework of the formal education system, generically referred to either as *non-formal* or *alternative approaches,* a few programmes within the framework of formal education share similar characteristics with the non-formal and alternative modes. Some of these are classified as *complementary approaches.*[11] The primary objective of these programme approaches, be

[8] Local Authorities (Municipal Council, Nairobi City Council)
[9] Children's Department/Ministry of Home Affairs and Department of Adult Education DAE)
[10] NGOs, CBOs, Women Groups, School Committees, Boards of Governors
[11] For example, Complimentary Opportunities for Primary Education (COPE) Programme in Uganda.

they non-formal, alternative or complementary, is to provide access, and improve equity, and quality in educational opportunities.

5.4 Need-based, demand-driven alternative forms of learning

The number of out-of-school children is an indication of the need for alternative forms of learning. Many have either not had access to formal schooling or have dropped out due to a variety of reasons including academic and financial. The growth of the non-formal sub sector is an indication of demand. It is estimated that there are over 6,000 non-formal schools and centers in Kenya catering to the learning needs of some 4.2 million children, youths and adults including 250,000 street children. In 1998 the total enrolment in Nairobi was 29,286 in 116 schools and centers.

Table 3: Enrolment in NFE Schools and Centres in Nairobi in 1998

No.	Division	No. of Schools/ Centres	No. of Girls	%	No. of Boys	%	Total
1.	Central Pumwani	29	2,300	51	2,231	49	4,531
2.	Embakasi	19	2,000	48	2,198	52	4,198
3.	Dagoretti	11	1,028	47	1,150	53	2,178
4.	Kasarani	19	3,086	48	3,358	52	6,444
5.	Kibera	22	2,375	50	2,350	50	4,725
6.	Makadara	8	2,314	50	2,322	50	4,636
7.	Westlands	8	1,350	52	1,224	48	2,574
		116	**14,453**	**49**	**14,833**	**51**	**29,286**

Source: Nairobi Provincial Adult Education Office, 1998

Table 4: Enrolment in NFE Schools and Centres in Nairobi in 1999

No	Division	No. of Schools	No. of Girls	%	No. of Boys	%	Total
1.	Central	31	2,532	49	2,668	51	5,200
2.	Embakasi	18	2,405	49	2,490	51	4,895
3.	Kasarani	45	5,847	54	4,913	46	10,760
4.	Kibera	22	2,404	49	2,529	51	4,933
5.	Westlands	8	1,253	51	1,179	49	2,450
		124	**14,441**	**51**	**13,797**	**49**	**28,238**

Source: Nairobi Provincial Adult Education Office, 1999

5.5 Persistence of Alternative Approaches

The need for relevant and culturally appropriate learning opportunities account for the persistence of alternative approaches. In the pastoral areas of Kenya, for example, the characteristics of alternative forms of learning including flexibility of timing and duration, cost-effectiveness in terms of finance and opportunity cost, absence of uniforms, functional curriculum content and the participation of the community in determining what is taught and learned are some of the reasons for persistence. There have also been limited but short-lived instances of "mobile schools".

6.0 Selected Case Studies in NFE and AABE

Following is a presentation of successful experiences in NfE and AABE in eight African countries.

6.1 Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP), Kenya Urban

6.1.1 Description

The Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP) was established by the Undugu Society of Kenya in 1978. The programme's objective was to offer opportunities for the acquisition of functional literacy and practical skills to street, and other disadvantaged children in the slums of Nairobi.

The programme is organized in three phases, and each phase lasts for a year. The subjects offered in phases 1, 2 and 3 are similar to those offered in formal primary schools. After phase 3, the learners receive vocational training in carpentry, sheet metal and tailoring. The processes of learning are generally learner-centred. Aspects of indigenous learning practices such as apprenticeship (learnership) are integrated into the processes of learning. Learners with a preference for vocational training are apprenticed to artisans in the informal sector for the purpose of enhancing their practical skills and having insights into the world of work.

6.1.2 Success Factors

A number of studies[12] have identified the following factors which have accounted for UBEP's success.

a) The learners are able to use the skills which they acquire to earn a living.
b) UBEP is contributing to the reduction of wastage in the education system, and to the rehabilitation of street children.
c) The similarity of UBEP's core curriculum and the formal school curriculum facilitates entry to formal education for those who desire to do so.
d) The teaching of functional literacy and numeracy provides a foundation for vocational training. Vocational education and training equip the learners with skills to earn a living. Learning is linked to production, and production-oriented functionality increases motivation for learning.
e) The apprenticeship or learnership system provides a link between learning and work, and facilitates transition from learning institutions to working life.

The apprentices serve as vital links between the community (informal sector of the economy) and non-formal institutions of learning.

6.1.3 *Lessons Learned*

a) The success of Undugu Basic Education Programme has shown that education which is relevant and oriented to the needs of the learners can contribute to the rehabilitation, and change in the behaviour of street children.
b) Alternative Approaches to Basic Education and Non-formal Education should not be seen as cheap alternatives to formal basic education. Vocational training, for example, requires certain inputs

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[12] See for example, ***Report on Functional Literacy: The Case of Undugu Basic Education Programme*** (UBEP) ***in Kenya***. Unesco sub-Regional office in Southern Africa, 1996. See also, ***Survival: The Undugu Society of Kenya's Integrated Approach to Urban Development.***

which may require capital expenditure. This could increase the cost of education.

c) When developing AABE-NFE programmes it is important to establish horizontal and vertical links with formal education in order to facilitate movement between the two sub-sectors.

d) AABE-NFE programmes for disadvantaged children are, in general, more relevant and sustainable when they include a skills development component in their curricula.

e) AABE-NFE programmes for out-of-school children are potentially helpful towards the achievement of the goal of education for all.

f) Provision of lunches for the children greatly improved their health and nutritional status.

g) Education and training enhance the chances of learners to participate in the processes of socio-economic development.

6.2 *Lchekuti* (Shepherds') Programme, Kenya Rural

6.2.1 Description

In response to the felt need for education expressed by the pastoralist community in Samburu District action was initiated by the community members themselves to provide educational opportunities for their children out of school. The *Lchekuti* programme is a non-formal education programme which incorporates aspects of alternative approaches in the form of multi-grade and multi-shift modes of learning. The programme addresses the learning needs of children aged 6 to 16. Learning takes place between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. when the animals have been brought home from pasture.

Enrolment and attendance are allowed to fluctuate according to the prevailing weather conditions. Enrolment is reported to be high during the wet season and low in the dry season. In times of drought both enrolment and attendance drop considerably.

Facilitation of learning is by volunteers and primary school teachers whose training has been facilitated by development agencies such as the GTZ-assisted Samburu District Development Programme (SDDP) and ActionAid Kenya.

The curriculum includes mother-tongue literacy in *Kisamburu and Kiswahili,* animal husbandry, numeracy, cultural and religious education, business education and child care. It is a reflection of the learning needs of the learners in a harsh physical environment (semi-arid land).

6.2.2 Success Factors

a) Homegrown solution to the problem and needs of out-of-school children and youths. The community saw a need and took action to address it.
b) Flexibility of timing and short duration of classes leave adequate time for the learners to attend to domestic chores. This is the quintessential feature of NFE.
c) Strong commitment to the principle of voluntarism. Volunteer teachers are members of the community.
d) Utilization of **multi-grade** and **multi-shift** approaches. Learners of different ages and levels of cognitive ability are catered for.
e) Involvement of the learners in the processes of curriculum development and preparation of curriculum support materials.

The following on the *Naiborkeju* (multi-shift) Programme, by a teacher, sums up the factors:

> This is a programme for both boys and girls' herders. Two groups of learners attend. One group attends from Monday to Wednesday. The other group attends from Thursday to Saturday while the first group takes care of the livestock. The programme has been quite successful in the wet season. In the dry season the programme is affected by the migration of the learners with their livestock in search of pasture. The volunteer teachers are committed but lack skills in multi-shift and multi-grade teaching. Parents are concerned about the education of their children.[13]

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[13] Presentation of a teacher during the Stakeholders' Forum on NFE-AABE in Maralal, Samburu District in April 2000. The Forum was jointly organized by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Department of Adult Education, UNICEF, CIDA and GTZ.

6.2.3 Lessons Learned

a) The diversity of the needs of the learners dictate the curriculum.
b) Homegrown solutions to local problems seemed more effective, and sustainable.
c) Gender-responsive and culturally-appropriate education increases motivation for learning.
d) The centrality of the role of the community in providing educational opportunities is dictated by the need for social action to address the myriad social issues in Samburu District.

6.3 Basic Education in Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA), Uganda

6.3.1 *Description*

BEUPA aims to improve the life perspectives of out-of-school children and adolescents between the ages of 9 and 18. The essential features of BEUPA include:

- Mother-tongue education;
- Integrated approach to learning;
- Similarity between the primary school curriculum and the BEUPA curriculum. The core curriculum of BEUPA is a condensed version of the primary school curriculum (Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and English). There is also instruction in psycho-social life skills, and living values education.
- The close relation between BEUPA and formal primary school facilitates interaction between the two. If they drop out from one sub-sector they can drop into the other.
- The delivery of the curriculum is shortened to 3 years from 5 years. The curriculum contents are organized into learning areas; a learning area is equivalent to one term's instruction.
- Utilization of expertise from the community in skills training provides a vital link between the school and the community, and makes the school a part of the community.
- Learning takes place three hours a day leaving the rest of the day for the learners to engage in other survival activities.

6.3.2.*Success Factors*

a) Facilitation of learning through child-centred and flexible approaches.

b) Focus of the curriculum on life after school. Transition from school to work is organized through career guidance.

c) Collection of relevant data for planning. NFE has been included in the *Education Management Information System (EMIS)*. This ensures that planning is informed by relevant and accurate data.

d) Involvement of the community in the implementation of BEUPA with regard to:

- community mobilization
- identification and registration of children for the learning centers
- Pre-selection of instructors from the community
- Monitoring of the processes of learning
- Provision of Community Own Resource Persons (CORPs)
- Facilitation of pre-vocational skills by members of the community.

6.3.3 Lessons Learned

a) Learner-friendly pedagogical processes and learning environments contribute a great deal to facilitating learning acquisition.

b) Utilization of the services of community facilitators harmonizes the relationship between the school and the community. Instead of being apart from the community the school becomes a part of the community thus enhancing school-community relations.

c) The integrated nature of the curriculum enhances the holistic development of the learner in terms of intellectual, physical, emotional and social development.

d) Provision for entry into formal education through the organization of the curriculum promotes interaction

between the formal and non-formal sub-sectors, and accords the latter parity of esteem

6.4 Alternative Approaches Through Community Schools in Zambia

6.4.1 Description

In Zambia, the Policy on Basic Education and Training contained in **Educating Our Future** makes reference to out-reach learning programmes for children who are not able to attend school. Non-formal education in Zambia is described as "an alternative provision of basic education by other organizations outside the government structures"

The Government of Zambia, through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, is involved in the provision of non-formal education through community training centers which were established by the colonial government to provide literacy, leadership and vocational training and health education for youths. Another aspect of non-formal education is agricultural extension provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

Opportunities for the youth to develop life skills are provided by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Child Development through the Youth Training Centres (Y.T.Cs). Zambia does not have a clear policy on non-formal education. The consequence of the absence of clear policy is lack of coordination resulting in duplication of efforts and dissipation of scarce resources.

Community schools represent the collective efforts by communities to respond to the learning needs of poor, deprived and marginalized children many of whom have never been to school. Of those who have been to school the majority have dropped out. It is reported (op.cit.) that there were 373 registered community schools in Zambia as at May 2000 catering to the needs of 47,276 children. The number of basic schools in Zambia were 4,000 with an enrolment of 1,617,558 pupils.

Like the "informal" schools in Kenya many of Zambia's community schools are in the shanty towns. They are low quality schools and exist in situations where "no one seems to be responsible for the quality of

teachers or the course itself".

6.4.2 Success Factors

a) vision of alternative approaches provides direction for policy development with regard to educational opportunities for out-of-school children.
b) Involvement of the Government of Zambia at both the policy and operational levels in facilitating access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged children.
c) Linkage between education and life skills training. What is taught and learned may be applied in practice.
d) Community involvement in the establishment of community schools. Community schools provide evidence of successful community mobilization, and solidarity in the provision of education for all.
e) Demand for education: this is evidenced in the 373 registered community schools with an enrolment of 47,276 learners. The 1990 census data revealed that more than 650,000 of the children aged 7 to 13 were not attending school due to shortage of school places in public schools and long distances from homes to schools for young children.

6.4.3 Lesson Learned

a) A clear vision of AABE and NFE is the basis for policy articulation and formulation.
b) Community action is essential for attaining the goal of education for all.

6.5. *Better Environmental Science Programme (BEST), Zimbabwe* [14]

6.5.1 Description

The BEST Programme represents a part of the development partnership between the Governments of Zimbabwe and the Federal Republic of Germany. The genesis of the programme was the recommendation of the Lewis-Taylor Commission of 1974, whose remit was to find out how primary education could be made more relevant to the lives of the learners. The Commission recommended that **education should be relevant and must prepare pupils for the world of work, and for real-life situations.** As a consequence of the Commission's recommendations *Environmental and Agricultural Science*, as a learning area, was introduced in the curriculum. Its focus was expected to be the relationship between humans and their physical environment.

6.5.2 *Success Factors*

a) clarity of objective of the role of education.

b) availability of resources both financial and technical, through bilateral development co-operation.

c) large-scale involvement of teachers in the preparation of the syllabus.

d) effectiveness of the *Cascade* mode of training of teachers and other implementers of BEST.

e) extensive use of the participatory methodology which reduced the traditional 'chalk and talk' method and increased the use of active learning such as 'learning by doing', other hands-on approaches, and experiential learning methods such as 'learning about the environment in the environment'.

f) parental/community involvement in teaching and learning *Environmental Science* in primary school.

g) utilization of the environment as a resource for learning and also as a source for learning resources.

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[14] I am grateful to the Zimbabwean delegates to the GTZ Basic Education Sector Meeting in Mombasa, May 7-11, 2001, for the information on BEST.

h) focus on teacher training with regard to development of alternative learning approaches and assessment of learning achievement.

6.4.3 Lessons Learned

a) Participation of programme implementers contributes to successful learning outcomes.
b) Effective collaborative partnership facilitates provision of resources for programme implementation.
c) Participatory methodologies contribute to programme effectiveness and efficiency.
d) Facilitation of transfer of training: the method of facilitating teaching and learning of *Environmental Science* are transferable to other learning areas.
e) Teacher/facilitator preparation contributes a great deal to effective learning outcomes.

6.6 *Political Literacy and Civic Education Programme, Kroo Bay Urban Slum, Freetown, Sierra Leone*

6.6.1 *Description*

The Political Literacy and Civic Education Project, was implemented in the Kroo Bay Urban Slum in Freetown in 1996. It was conceived and designed against the backdrop of under-development which was characterized by large-scale mismanagement of the economy, high levels of official corruption, violation of people's rights and general inefficiency and apathy accompanied by a pervasive culture of impunity. Lack of informed participation or no participation, mass illiteracy and a general lack of civic consciousness were visibly in evidence. The objective of the project was to enable the people of Kroo Bay, through functional literacy and civic education, to participate in the processes of good governance.

6.6.2 *Success Factors*

a) The project's objectives were appealing in a political environment characterized by mismanagement and general administrative inefficiency resulting in mass pauperization.
b) The captive nature of the target groups i.e. unemployed youths and adults.

c) The integrated nature of the project. The project was community-based, and it sought to address the literacy and civic education needs *intandem.*

d) External support was available. Technical and financial support was provided by the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the International Community Education Association (ICEA) and the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE).

e) The role of the Institute of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies (INSTADEX) of the University of Sierra Leone. INSTADEX had initiated contacts with the Kroo Bay residents through the staff and students of the diploma in adult education course. They were generally highly regarded by the Sierra Leonean public; consequently, their participation in the project, which was highly valued, was an indication of its importance.

f) The residents of Kroo Bay trusted the project co-ordinator who had led a team to organize two Needs Assessment Surveys in 1988 and 1992.[15]

g) Partnership: Partner institutions including the German Adult Education Association (IIZ/DVV) provided invaluable support towards the achievement of the project objectives.

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[15] The objectives, processes and outcomes of the surveys were documented in the following publications: Thompson, J.D. (ed) *From Mount Aureol to Kroo Bay: Assessing Needs for Programme Planning. Aureol Paper No. 1* Institute of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies Fourah Bay College Freetown in Sierra Leone. Thompson, J.D. (ed) *Freetown Urban Slum Dwellers: Their Problems and Needs Aureol Paper No.2* Institute of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Sierra Leone. See also,, Thompson, Ekundayo J.D. *Political Literacy and Civic Education: An Integrated Approach.* Kroo Bay Community Education and Development Network, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 1996. Thompson, Ekundayo J.D. *Governance and Civic Education.* Adult Education for Development, 1997.

6.6.3 Lessons Learned

a) The implementation of the project was timely. It was implemented in a political environment that was characterized by a crisis brought about largely by illiteracy and political apathy.
b) It was relevant to the on-going process of democratization.
c) It raised a high level of awareness of the importance of political literacy and civic education. The political literacy and civic education dimensions were new items in a *business-as-usual* literacy agenda.
d) Innovation in programme content and process is likely to increase the motivation of the participants for learning.

Adult education as an empowering process was given practical expression

6.7. *Creating a Literate Environment Through Mother-tongue Literacy in Bukina Faso*

6.7.1 Description

Tin Tua was established as an NGO in 1985 by the Gulmu Community, to reactivate a state-sponsored literacy programme which was described as generally unsuccessful. Towards this end, a network of literacy centers which was established in 31 villages in the Gulmu region facilitated literacy learning through the medium of the *Gulmancema* language which, although spoken by about 500,000 people is regarded as a minority language. The literacy centers served 15,000 adolescent and adult learners, 41 percent of whom were women.

6.7.2 Success Factors

a) Although the state-sponsored literacy programme was "generally unsuccessful" it nevertheless provided a springboard for *Tin Tua* to launch its local initiative.
b) The *Gulmancema* language which was spoken by 500,000 people provided an effective medium of literacy facilitation.
c) The general awareness created the need for literacy and its effects on the motivation of potential learners. The need for literacy was indicated by the absence of primary schools in almost all the 31 villages which the *Tin Tua* programme covered.

Consequently, *Tin Tua* embarked on the establishment of **Community** primary schools. The medium of instruction was *Gulmancema* initially with the gradual introduction of French.

d) Community mobilization and action through *Tin Tua* to address the twin problems of illiteracy and undervelopment in the Gulmu region.

e) The dynamics of social change, democratization and economic liberalization necessitated functional literacy and numeracy.

6.7.3 Lessons Learned

a) Literacy in the mother-tongue results, in general, in more effective learning outcomes than literacy in other tongues. Comprehension of a second or foreign language is facilitated by the foundation which the first language provides.

b) Research findings[16] indicate that "the children who started education in their mother-tongue performed, on average, significantly better than the graduates of standard primary schools".

c) Literacy is sustained in a literate environment. ***Labaali*** the monthly *Gulmancema* newspaper with 3,000 subscribers contributed to creating a literate environment.[17]

d) Facilitation of literacy learning through community organization development. Women in economic development association demanded literacy to enhance economic transactions.

e) Alternative paths to literacy facilitate access to educational opportunities for girls and women. 52% of the 46,000 learners who were declared "literate" in one of the national languages of Burkina Faso in 1996 were women.

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[16] See, for example, research conducted by Easton et. al., under the joint aegis of Club du Sahal/OECD, the Inter-state Committee for Combating Drought in the Sahel and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). Cited in **Indigenous Knowledge Notes** No. 13, October 199, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

[17] For a discussion on creating a literate environment, see my presentation at the 1999 ADEA Pre-Biennial Assembly of the NFE Working Group. This paper has been published as No. 17 of the **Knowledge and Information Management Series** of the Kenya Post-Literacy Project.

6.8 Cost-effective Capacity Building in Literacy, Mali

6.8.1 Description

Mali like Burkina Faso had a number of homegrown initiatives in the promotion of literacy in 1974 after the demise of externally motivated state-sponsored national literacy campaigns such as the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP).[18] Literacy facilitation was in *Bambara/Malinke* through the c*ascade* approach in the village of Sirakoro. A cohort of literacy learners who had acquired competencies in literacy trained another cohort of literacy learners who trained another cohort until there was critical mass of literate people.

6.8.2 Success Factors

a) Mother-tongue literacy
b) The economic context of literacy was a source of relevance of the learning content and motivation for the learners.
c) Community Action: The resolve of the Sirakoro community that everyone should be literate in his or her own language. Community mobilization resulted in the building of a primary school and development of a curriculum.
d) Locally-generated materials (LGMs): Learning materials were generated on the cultural heritage of the people; these provided motivation for reading, and by extension for learning.

6.8.3 Lessons Learned

a) Motivation for literacy can be created when learners are themselves involved in the processes of materials production.

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[18] For a discussion of the literacy initiatives in Mali, see, Mamadou Bagayoko "Non-Formal Education as a strategy for National Development" unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Southern Califonia, Los Angeles, 1978. See also Peter Easton, "*Sharpening Our Tools: Improving Evaluation in Adult and Non-Formal Education*". Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education/German Foundation for International Development, 1996.

The history and culture of the people are both sources of materials production, and motivation for literacy.

b) Bottom-up (decentralized) approach to literacy facilitation: NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) provided local ownership to the processes of literacy.

c) Language is both a cultural and political asset for literacy. It contributes to the promotion of minority languages and enhances the right of minority groups to learn in their own languages thus enhancing their identity.

6.9 Research and Development of Literacy Materials, Senegal

6.9.1 *Description*

ARED (the Association for Research on Education) has since 1986, been involved in the publication of reading materials in the *Pulaar* language. Pulaar-speaking emigrants in a number of Middle-Eastern and European countries have provided financial support for ARED's activities.

6.9.2 Success Factors

a) External support by *Pulaar* speakers in the diaspora.

b) Demand orientation: the need for local language reading materials.

c) The effects of the "winds of change" in the domain of local literacies.

d) Relevance of published materials to the socio-economic situation.

6.9.3 Lessons Learned

a) Literacy accords respect to those who posses it; this motivates others to become literate.

b) The cultural dimension of literacy is a powerful force for literacy.

c) Sustainability of literacy efforts is enhanced by effective local action in awareness creation, and social mobilization.

7.0 Summary of Key Characteristics of the Case Studies

7.1 Diversity of Objectives

The case studies have shown that non-formal and alternative approaches basic education have been appropriate responses to the need and demand for basic education for deprived and marginalized populations. With the exception of the Zimbabwe case, the cases presented are outside the mainstream formal educational system. Nevertheless, all the cases do illustrate the diversity of the objectives and focal clientele which non-formal education, and alternative approaches to basic education programmes seek to address. These include rehabilitation and education of street children (Undugu Basic Education Programme, Kenya); special needs education (Kenya and Uganda); community school approaches (Zambia); methodological innovation in formal education (Zimbabwe); political literacy (Sierra Leone); work, and culture-oriented literacy (Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal).

7.2 Demand Orientation

The exponential growth of the NFE and AABE sub-sector evidences the nature of the demand and the need to make provision that is relevant to the needs and circumstances of the learners, culturally appropriate, pedagogically sound and ecologically viable and sustainable. Adults, youths, marginalized children including street children, slum dwellers, herders in pastoralists communities are in general, the beneficiaries of NFE and AABE programmes. The capacity to respond to the diversity of the learning needs of this target population is one of the key features of the NFE-AABE interventions.

7.3 Formal-Non-Formal Nexus

Another feature is the apparent close relationship between NFE and AABE and formal school provision. The similarity of the curriculum, Uganda and Kenya cases for example, does not only facilitate access between the formal and the non-formal sub-sectors it also seeks to accord parity of esteem to non-formal education.

7.4 Official Recognition

Recognition by government (Uganda COPE)[19] and participation in the provision of alternative learning opportunities (Zambia community schools). These could provide a basis for both policy initiation and enhancement of collaboration with non-government providers.

7.5 Innovation

The Zimbabwe case evidences curricular integration, community mobilization and participation, and application of participatory methods. A number of innovative pedagogical features which in essence are non-formal are also in evidence. The Zimbabwe case also emphasizes the role of the teacher without whom efforts at innovation in education may be constrained.

8.0 Some Critical Issues and Concerns

8.1 Concept of Mainstreaming

The concept of "mainstreaming" suggests inclusion of NFE and AABE in the mainstream formal education system. This suggestion seems to be justified on the grounds of equity and quality of provision, and in the context of the achievement of the goals of education of for all. It is assumed that the mainstream formal education system is better placed in terms of its inputs and processes to deliver quality basic education. Consequently, mainstreaming could remove NFE and AABE from the periphery and contribute to solving the problem of social exclusion, and marginalization. The following perspectives of mainstreaming can be discerned from the case studies, and from the review of related literature.

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[19] Complementary Opportunities in Primary Education. See, for example, Karin A.L. Hyde *et al. Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education Programme. Interim Report.* August 1997.

8.1.1 Mainstreaming as Official Recognition

In this perspective NFE and AABE are mainstreamed by the granting of official recognition. This is illustrated by the Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe cases.

8.1.2 Mainstreaming as Recognition and Utilization of Diversity

Diversity in all its manifestations is recognized and creatively utilized in the provision of NFE and AABE to create access to education and learning opportunities for millions of children, youths and adults. Diversity in terms of learning needs, language and culture for example, determine to a large extent the purposes and organization of NFE and AABE. All the cases illustrate how diversity influences the provision and delivery of NFE and AABE.

8.1.3 Mainstreaming as Integration

This perspective suggests that both the formal and non-formal sub-sectors be integrated in a unified system of education with routes of access between the two based on a system of equivalency. This way, a mutually beneficial relationship would be established with advantages for both. Formal education would benefit by incorporating non-formal attributes in its modes of operation and set it on the way to both structural and methodological transformation. In the case of non-formal education it could be accorded parity of esteem.

8.1.4 Mainstreaming as System Transformation

Transformation of the formal education system to make it more open, effective, efficient and humane, is proposed. Structural and methodological transformation should be the quintessence of system transformation. This implies redesign of basic education.

8.2 Mainstreaming: A Critical Issue

The discourse on mainstreaming has raised a number of concerns. There seems to be a general feeling of unease with the concept of *mainstreaming* in view of the deficiencies of the dominant formal education system. NFE and AABE, it is argued, should be provided space for autonomous development in order to fulfil

educational purposes which are specific to the needs and circumstances of its target population. However, the low quality of a majority of non-formal education programmes seem to render the argument of NFE's autonomous development untenable.

The issue of mainstreaming NFE andAABE should be discussed in terms of provision of accessible, equitable and effective learning opportunities for all. Towards this end, mainstreaming could be perceived as formal recognition of innovative provision and practice in NFE and AABE. Calls for the inclusion of NFE and AABE in the legal framework of basic education will have a number of implications for achieving the goals of Education for All. Firstly, the learners in the non-formal sub-sector will be counted in the national education statistics. Currently they are not included in many countries. Secondly, learners may be availed opportunities to move between the formal and the non-formal sub-sectors within a unified, albeit, diversified basic education system. Thirdly, minimum standards with regard to provision and practice, and assessment of learning outcomes will be set and maintained. This could be a step towards quality control and assurance. Fourthly, administrative, curricular, financial and other forms of support may be provided on the basis of the diversity of needs.

A contrary, albeit radical view, that NFE and AABE, because of their transformative potential, could be the mainstream, appears unacceptable ostensibly because of the prevailing negative image which is a consequence of their low status. Besides, the marginal nature of their clientele is a constraint to their development into the mainstream. Even its nomenclature is questioned because it is the only sub-sector which is described by what it is not – "non-formal".

There has been an apparent agreement that NFE has opened up new spaces for learning. Opportunities for access have been provided by the removal of barriers created by the conventional mainstream whose conservative ethos has resulted in the exclusion of millions of children and youths. A serious concern is the

possibility of the demise of NFE and AABE in a structurally and organizationally flawed mainstream.

8.3 NFE in the Image of the Formal Education Community

The standards of the mainstream, it would seem, are the determinants of the quality of NFE provisions many of which, as the case studies illustrate, are dissimilar from those of formal education. NFE is expected to provide a wider range of learning services which, in a number of cases, could be complementary to, or even substitutes for formal education. In many countries these may be the only available learning opportunities for most people and effective means of rectifying the distortions created by mainstream formal schooling. A number of writers have examined the question of the objectives of NFE relative to FE. For many, NFE is expected to provide greater opportunity for innovation in education. Ahmed (1975) had proposed that the *raison d'être* of NFE is to change the conventional production function of education. Freire (1970) argued that formal education is oppressive and that the process of concientization through NFE will bring about a cultural revolution to end class stratification and exploitation promoted by formal education. Kindervatter (1979) presented NFE as "empowering process" oriented towards systems change rather than individual change. *Empowering* is operationally defined in this paper as the process of "people gaining an understanding of, and control over social, economic and/or political forces in order to improve their standing in society". NFE can be transformative in "empowering" those who are disadvantaged to understand and change the relation of domination and subordination in their society. The Sierra Leone case is an example of a project with an empowerment objective.

The point which is being emphasized here is that quality should be seen in the context of the needs-based and demand–centred objectives of NFE and not through the lenses of what obtains in formal education, especially at the primary level. Formal primary education has been criticized for being unrelated to the life and environmental circumstances of the learners. For some critics it

has become a ritual and a rite of passage for young people and has very little or nothing to do with the problems of living in their environment.

8.4 Integrating the Formal and Non-Formal

The view of integrating both the formal and non-formal education sub-sectors has generated consensus on the way forward for system restructuring and transformation. There appears to be consensus that the distinctions between 'formal' and 'non-formal' ought to be removed. NFE should be recognized as an integral part of the education system with functional routes of access between the two. However, the qualitative development of NFE is seen as a prerequisite for system integration. How can NFE and AABE be developed qualitatively?

9.0 Proposals For a Way Forward

9.1 Advocacy For a Legal and Policy Framework for NFE and AABE

It would seem that the circumstances for policy advocacy in favour of NFE and AABE are propitious given the on-going reforms in many countries. The economic, social and political reforms in a number of countries are having tremendous implications for non-formal education policy articulation and development. Proposals for poverty alleviation as enunciated in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) recognize the critical role of basic education in poverty alleviation. In Uganda, for example, Article 30 of the Constitution provides for education as a human right. In Kenya Parliament passed The *Children Act* of 2001, which provides that, "every child shall be entitled to education the provision of which shall be the responsibility of the Government and parents". The Bill further provides that, "Basic primary education shall be compulsory and the Government shall take measures to reduce the costs of education and eventually provide such education free and

the Minister shall make regulations for the implementation of this object" [20]

The Children Act is a concrete manifestation of action to domesticate the 1989 *U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and other international Conventions, Treaties and Declarations which have implications for the protection, care and education of children. These examples are instructive for policy advocacy for ADEA Non-Formal Education Working Group.

9.2 Construction of an Institutional Framework

It has been suggested that, the provision of non-formal education, and alternative approaches to basic education should be within an institutional framework. In Kenya, for example, the NFE Desk in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has been upgraded to a Unit with the appointment of a Deputy Director. Under the 1999-2003 UNICEF-Kenya Government Programme of Cooperation, action on a policy for non-formal education has been initiated; a non-formal education curriculum, and curriculum support materials have been developed; the training of NFE teachers' programme is now in progress. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has initiated action to assign Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) teachers to non-formal schools, some of which have been recognized as examination centres for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) Examination. A *Handbook for Inspection of Educational Institutions* has been published. Non-formal and alternative approaches to basic education institutions will henceforth be included in the list of educational institutions to be inspected by officials of the inspectorate division of the Ministry of Education. Proposals are being considered by the government for budgetary provision to NFE. An institutional framework for NFE-AABE will

[20] Government Printer, Nairobi. 16th March 2001. *Kenya Gazette Supplement Bills*, 2001. The Bill has received the presidential assent.

undoubtedly contribute greatly to ensuring quality provision. Advocacy towards this end could be a strategic task for ADEA.

9.3 Development of NFE in its Own Image

The single most important challenge for non-formal educationalists is to construct models and formulate methods for establishing the identity of NFE. Towards this end, there is an urgent need to determine the purposes of NFE in the light of the special needs of its clientele; how the processes of addressing the needs should be monitored; and how these should be assessed.

9.4 Capacitating the NFE Teaching Force

Another challenge is to develop and improve the 'qualification', motivation and performance of teachers. Resources in NFE like in many other sub-sectors are scarce. Improving the performance of teachers, therefore, will be an exercise in improving the utilization of scarce resources. Unqualified, poorly motivated and 'unwilling' volunteer teachers preponderate the non-formal education field of practice. If the mission of NFE is to innovate and transform, it is imperative to have a critical mass of creative and highly motivated teachers.

10.0 In Lieu of Conclusion

Non-Formal Education and Alternative Approaches to Basic Education constitute strategic interventions to achieve the goal of Education for All, by All, and in accordance with the principles of the *World Declaration on Education for All and Framework of Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, which includes the strengthening of partnerships.[21] Towards this end the *Declaration* calls for:

> New and revitalized partnerships at all levels...:Partnerships among all sub-sectors and forms of education, recognizing the special role of teachers and other educational personnel: partnerships between education and other government departments, including planning, finance, labour, communications and other social sectors; partnerships between government and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, local communities, religious groups and families (p.7).

[21] Inter-Agency Commission. 1990. *World Conference on Education for All and Framework of Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*

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- *Curriculum Development in Non-Formal Education (1995).*
- *Non-Formal Education in Urban Kenya: Findings of a Study in Kisumu, Mombasa and Nairobi (2001).*
- *Formal –Non-Formal-Informal Interfaces: Implication for Access, Retention and Learning Achievement (2002).*

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Putting Bread on the Table: Literacy and Livelihood in Kenya (2002).

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